

# Compulsive Gambling Fact sheet

The Governor's Task Force on Compulsive Gambling (Executive Order 2005-015, March 2005) laid the ground work that led to the creation of the New Mexico Council on Compulsive Gambling (NMCGC) (HB 267). The NMCGC is charged with developing and implementing a New Mexico Strategic Prevention and Treatment Approach to Compulsive Gambling Plan.

## Overview and Background

As with many other states in the US, the increase in legalized gambling opportunities, and states' increased dependence on revenues generated through gambling, has increased the incidence of gambling-related problems in New Mexico. Unfortunately, problem gambling can increase the potential for repercussions in other areas of people's lives, including behavioral, financial and psychological problems. Symptoms of addictive gambling are similar to addictions to drugs and alcohol. These include a loss of control and preoccupation with the activity and denial that a problem exists. By contrast, the public is less aware of problem gambling and problem gambling is easier to hide.

Research conducted by the National Gambling Impact Study Commission shows that .07% to 4% of the population that gambles can be expected to have a gambling addiction problem. Data review conducted by the Compulsive Gambling Task Force (2005) and the New Mexico Compulsive Gambling Council (NMCGC) identified the following populations as potentially at risk due to problems related to excessive gambling: people with other addictive problems, especially alcohol and tobacco (the correlation with illegal drug use is much lower); Hispanic women (they have the highest incidence of calling help lines, often times for other people); and teens.

## New Mexico Report Card

The Report Card combines data collected in New Mexico since 1996 related to various gambling surveys conducted by the Department of Health, the NM Association of Indian Gaming Study (Indian Gaming Studies) and the University of New Mexico.

### Gambling and Problems with Gambling Among Adults in New Mexico

Indicator	Prevalence Estimate (%)
Proportion of Adults Gambling in the Past Year	67.6%*
Past-year One or More Problems with Gambling	4.0† to 4.9%*
Past-year Problem and Pathological Gambling (3+ problems)	0.8† to 1.3%*
Past-year Pathological Gambling (5 or more problems)	0.3† to 0.6%*
Lifetime Problem and Pathological Gambling	2.2%*
Historical Past-year Problem & Pathological Gambling ('96/'98)	3.9%**

### History of Bankruptcy by Past-year Gambling Status

Proportion Ever Filed for Bankruptcy Among:	Prevalence Estimate (%)†
Non-Gamblers	8.6%
Gamblers with No Problem Behaviors	7.9%* to 10.9%
Gamblers with One or More Problem Behaviors	9.8%
Gamblers with Three or More Problem Behaviors	6.7%

Sources: \* R. Volberg, B. Bernhard. Gemini Research, Ltd. June 21, 2006  
† BRFS, CDC & NM Department of Health. October 2006  
\*\* UNM CASAA, 1996 (with NMDOH) and 1998, data sets combined

## Funding for Compulsive Gambling Prevention & Treatment Programs

Currently, five funding sources for compulsive gambling prevention education and treatment programs.

### State of New Mexico General Fund

In Fiscal Year 2009, the NM Human Services Department (HSD) received \$100,000 for compulsive gambling training and treatment.

### NM Gaming Control Board Regulated Casinos (\$621,446/year)

State law requires gaming institutions regulated by the NM Gaming Control Board to dedicate .25 of 1% of net win to compulsive gambling prevention and treatment programs.

### Tribal Casinos (\$1.7 million/year)

According to the Tribal Compacts with the State of New Mexico, tribal casinos are required to spend no less than .25 of 1% of their net win revenue on compulsive gambling treatment, assistance programs and prevention efforts.

### NM Lottery (\$84,000/year)

Section 6-24-7 (J) NMSA 1978 of the New Mexico Lottery Act states that the NM Lottery Board shall "support problem gambling initiatives and provider information to players about where to obtain problem gambling assistance in New Mexico" by providing hotline/helpline services for problem gamblers.

### New Mexico Council on Problem Gambling (\$988,000/year)

The New Mexico Council on Problem Gambling (NMCPG) receives funding, in part, from the .25 of 1% tax from the tribal and non-tribal operators and the NM Lottery to conduct compulsive gambling prevention and treatment programs.

### Policy and Legislative Development

In 2009, the NMCGC proposed legislation that was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor (Senate Bill 229), which outlined a specific process for an individual to seek self-exclusion from all non-tribal casinos, racinos (horse or greyhound race tracks that have casinos), licensed nonprofits and bingo enterprises, and the lottery within New Mexico. (The Tribes and Pueblos have a self-exclusion program in place.)

The NMCGC recommended Senate Joint Memorial 17, which passed the 2009 New Mexico Legislature, to minimize the negative social costs associated with minor criminal activity. The legislation requests that the district attorneys make every effort to place defendants who are accused of committing nonviolent offenses that result from the defendant's underlying gambling addiction in pre-prosecution diversion programs.